पूरी कोशिश कर रहे है कि इस काम को जल्दी से जल्दी खत्म करें । (व्यवधान) पैसा तो आने दो ।

Quality of Food supplied by Railways

*304. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the deterioration in the quality of food supplied by Railways in running trains ;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken or proposed to be taken to ensure the quality thereof ;

(c) whether there is any proposal to hand over the Railway catering units to private contractors ; and

(d) if so, what would be the fate of the kitchen staff engaged in Railway pantry cars ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) and (b) Improvement in catering service is an on-going and continuous process. Step taken/proposed to be taken include introduction of pantry car service, modernisation of base kitchens, introduction of casserole service, intensive inspections, etc.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) All the staff will be suitably redeployed by retraining where required.

SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN : Madam, recently, I happened to travel by the Tamil Nadu Express on my onward and return journey, both ways. I found that there has been no improvement at all in the quality of food supplied to the travelling public. On top of it, they have increased the charges by Rs. 2. Earlier, it was Rs. 10. Now, the lunch costs Rs. 12. But there is absolutely no improvement. The hon. Minister has not answered this point. Kindly see the question which I had put. I asked : 'whether Government are aware of the deterioration in the quality of food supplied—a' He has not answered it. He has only asaid in a general way that improvement in catering service is an on-going and continuous process. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister admits the fact that there is deterioration in the quality of food service. There is absolutely no improvement at all even though they have raised it by Rs. 2. There is deterioration in quality. Let the Minister answer this first.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Madam, providing food to the travelling public is really a Herculean task. (*Interruptions*) The quality has to be maintained. In spite of proper direction and supervision we have not been able to provide the food of their taste. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Herculean task ?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : But the Minister is capable of handling the Herculean task.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Madam, the complaints are common. It is not a case of Tamil Nadu alone. Almost in all the trains there is a complaint that the food is not satisfactory. This we have taken very seriously. We have instructed... (*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Listen to him first.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : We have instructed the concerned people to see that the quality is maintained. Regular checks are being undertaken. We are on the job. Also we are thinking in terms of privatisation which is not being assimmilated by the unions and other people. The main function of our railways is to

undertake transportation operation and not ancillary catering business. For this reason we have proposed to privatise catering.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Second supplementary.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : But we are not interested in small contractors.

SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN : I am sorry, he has not answered my question whether there is deterioration or not. However, he admits that there are complaints not only from Tamil Nadu but from all over India, I am glad.

My second supplementary is, he says that there will be a change and he is going to give it to contractors. What will happen to the kitchen and other staff ? He has not said what is the number of people employed and what is the staff that is going to be deployed, what will be their fate. He has not replied to that question.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Madam, about staff, there are 1684 people employed in Group C, 5931 in Group A and there are about 5483 commission, bearers and vendors. However, when we go in for privatisation of catering, this surplus staff will not be retrenched. They will be given proper training and in a phased manner they will be redeployed in commercial departments themselves.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Have the private people given an assurance that they will employ them ? I think that is the concern in his mind.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : No, no. That is the responsibility of the Railways to redeploy them. It is not the private people who are going to redeploy them, it is the Railways which is going to redeploy them.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Madam, I want to know from the Minister. ...(*Interruptions*). I want to draw her attention.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : I am moving slowly. If my *dhayan* is not diverted...

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Madam, from 1985 to 1989, during the Rajiv Gandhi Government, one of the conscious dicisions taken by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and implemented was to strengthen the departmental catering by the Railways. The kitchens were modernised and a lot of efforts were made by the then Railway Minister, Mr. Madhavrao Scindiaji, to improve the quality of food and service to the customers. Has this Government taken a conscious decision to reverse that decision ?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : There is no question of reversal of a decision. Modernisation of base kitchens, refreshment rooms and other factors, they are in process. We are not reversing that decision. All that we are trying now is that we want to privatise catering in a phased manner. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : How can you privatise ? That is exactly...(*Interruptions*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : No, no, not like that. If you really want an answer, let him answer first and then you can put another supplementary. I have got so many names. If all of you speak together, neither he can understand nor I.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Apart from modernisation of base kitchens and also providing modern appliances in kitchens, we are introducing casserole service, etc. Apart from that, to strengthen this we are giving training to the staff and supervisors. We are also eliminating the use of charcoal and using LPG. Therefore, we are strengthening it and there is no reversal as such. Because of

certain conditions we thought that in a phased manner we should give the catering to private people. Even today, as it is if we see the statistics, departmental catering is done in 71 stations and 49 trains and private contractors are operating in 2,892 stations and 43 trains. So, this is an existing thing. Our object is to see how best quality food can be served to the passengers.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Shrimati Mira Das...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had laid down that instead of privatization, departmental catering should be strengthened. Now they are going in for privatization. If this is not a reversal, what is it ? Why are they shy ? Mr. Manmohan Singh's privatization is infecting the Railway Ministry also...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE : They are improving...(*Interruptions*)...

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF) : Madam, I must categorically say...(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Please, just listen and stop talking in between so that we can hear what the Minister is saying.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF : Madam, the catering services in the railways have been reviewed at various levels by different expert committees. Based on that, a lot of improvements have been done, including the base kitchen concept. As my friend, Mr. Kamal Morarka, has said, no doubt certain catering facilities were upgraded and modernized earlier during the period of Mr. Madhavrao Scindia—which we have maintained and which we are carrying on. The first basic question came from the main questioner himself. As my colleague has admitted, there have been some shortcomings in giving standard satisfaction to the travelling public. When my colleague has said about the Herculean task, there was laughter in the House. The Herculean task is, people who travel in the train and who are used to sumptuous and tasty food from the housewives, if they expect the same in the trains, we will not be able to give that...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI R.K. DHAWAN : I think you are giving better food !...(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Give the job to some women !...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI ASHIS SEN : Madam, that is about married people. What about bachelors?...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI M.A. BABY : Madam, moreover, he is...(*Interruptions*)... It is an unnecessary imputation on women...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF : One of the main problems in the railways is...(*Interruptions*)... Madam, if I am allowed to speak, I will speak...(*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Yes, please allow him to speak.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF : One of the problems with the railway catering services is, there is no professionalism is this. So far as the Cooks are concerned, a Khalasi is made a Cook, who does not know how to cook. This is where the problem comes. This is the problem.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : Is that the problem ? How much are you paying him ? That is the problem.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Mr. Dipen Ghosh, will you please sit down ?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF : please bear with me. The problem is, in every aspect there is a need for a cerain amount of professionalism.

My friends have been saying, privatization, privatization ! Whatever we have today, we have had discussions with the two Federations. We are not privatizing everything. We have today with the railways—the departmental catering. Whatever we do not have—anything that is new—we are not going to departmentalize it ; we are allowing it to private persons... (*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Shrimati Mira Das.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : If you privatize it, will the private contractors supply good food ?...(*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Order, please.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF : First, please allow me to answer and then you can ask anything... (*Interruptions*)...First listen to me and then you can ask any question. Then you can question anything. First of all, we are not going in for further privatisation wherever we have departmental catering. We have talked to the trade unions.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Question Hour is over.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF : The trade unions have also agreed that wherever there is necessity for professionalism, there also we can bring it in.

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : मैडम, इस पर हाफ एन आवर डिस्कशन कराइए ।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You send me a letter, and we will consider it, if it is of that concern. Now you can go and eat in the Cental Hall. The Railway canteen will serve you.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH : Madam, privatisation cannot be a guarantee of better food...(*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : If Members are so concerned, they can write, and it can be sonsidered for a Half-an-Hour Discussion.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

मिट्टी के तेल का आयात

*305. **श्री राम सिंह राठवा** : क्या **पट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री** यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि गत वर्ष मिट्टी तेल का आयात किया गया था;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका कितनी मात्रा में किस दर पर आयात किया गया ;

(ग) उक्त तेल का आयात किन-किन देशों से किया गया ; और

(घ) इस तरह आयात किये जाने के क्या कारण है ?

पैट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री (श्री बी० शंकरानंद) : (क) से (घ) मांग और घरेलू उपलब्धता के बीच के अन्तर को पूरा करने के लिये, 215 अमरीकी डालर प्रति मी० टन की अनुमानित औसत दर पर वर्ष 1991-92 के दौरान करीब 3.3 मि० मी० टन मिट्टी के तेल का आयात किया गया था । बहरीन, संयुक्त अरब अमीरात, मलेशिया तथा पहले के सोवियत संघ से आवधिक संविदाओं के तहत और स्पाट खरीदों के जरिये आयात किया गया ।

रोला में "हिमालयन नेशनल पार्क" की स्थापना

*306. **श्री महेश्वर सिंह** : क्या **पर्यावरण और वन** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) हिमाचल प्रदेश में कुल्लू जिले में रोला नामक स्थान पर "हिमालयन नेशनल पार्क" के निर्माण की अद्यतन स्थिति क्या है;